

Claims:

1. Optical fiber cable comprising:

(a) an optical fiber bundle comprising a plurality of longitudinally
extending optical fibers spaced from one another,

5 (b) an encasement having an essentially circular cross section
surrounding each of the plurality of optical fibers.

2. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the encasement is a polymer having
an elastic modulus greater than 170 MPa at 23 °C.

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3. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the optical fibers each have centers
and the center-to-center spacing of nearest neighbor optical fibers is at least $D + 20$
microns, where D is the diameter of the optical fibers.

15 4. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the optical fibers each have centers
and the center-to-center spacing of nearest neighbor optical fibers is in the range
 $D + 20$ to $D + 150$ microns, where D is the diameter of the optical fibers.

20 5. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the optical fiber bundle comprises
optical fibers randomly spaced.

6. The optical fiber cable of claim 5 with 1-8 optical fibers.

7. The optical fiber cable of claim 6 with four optical fibers having centers on the corners of a square.

8. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the optical fiber bundle comprises
5 at least 3 optical fibers, the optical fibers having centers, with the centers lying on a common axis.

9. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 additionally including an additional polymer layer over the encasement.

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10. The optical fiber cable of claim 6 wherein the additional polymer layer has an elastic modulus of at least 210 MPa at 23 °C.

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11. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the minimum thickness of the encasement measured from the outside of an optical fiber to the outside of the encasement is in the range 50-500 microns.

12. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the encasement is low-density polyethylene.

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13. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the encasement is essentially void-free.

14. The optical fiber cable of claim 1 wherein the encasement is oval in cross section.